

SHORTER NOTE

THELYPTERIS TORRESIANA IN VENEZUELA. — For several years, the senior author has been intrigued by the sudden appearance and persistence in his Caracas garden of a terrestrial, acaulescent fern, most attractive with its pale green, large, gracefully thrice-cut fronds. Specimens sent to Dr. John Mickel were identified as *Thelypteris torresiana* (Gaud.) Alston, a species originally described from Guam and found native elsewhere in the Asian tropics. In the New World, this species has become introduced and naturalized in the southeastern United States, Cuba, Jamaica, the Lesser Antilles, Trinidad, Tobago, Honduras, Venezuela, Brazil, and Argentina.

Vareschi in Lasser (Fl. Venez. 1:439. 1969) treats this species under the invalidly published name "Lastrea setigera." Morton (Amer. Fern J. 52:27–29. 1962) gives a correct synonymy and has shown that the species should not be confused with the rare Old World *T. setigera* (Blume) Ching.

Leonard (Amer. Fern J. 62:97–99. 1972) observed the preference of *T. torresiana* for moist ravines and stream banks in the southeastern United States. It occurs in similar habitats in Venezuela, in such places as moist forests along roads and trails at 400–1400 m altitude. It is common in cool cloud forests, but also grows in warmer zones, both in deciduous and evergreen tropical forests. In the senior author's garden in Caracas, it is aggressive, weedy, and often invasive, characteristics which have facilitated its spread in natural habitats. In the localities where it has become naturalized, it appears to be part of the native vegetation.

According to specimens in the Herbario Nacional de Venezuela (VEN), *T. torresiana* was first found in Venezuela in 1943 in the Parque Nacional Pittier, Estado Aragua (Killip & Lasser 37797, US, VEN). Since then it has spread in the Coastal Cordillera throughout northeastern Venezuela to the states of Portuguesa, Yaracuy, Carabobo, Guárico, Miranda, Sucre, and Monagas, and to the Distrito Federal.—Julian A. Steyermark, Instituto Botánico, Apartado 2156, Caracas, Venezuela and Francisco Ortega, Estación Biológica "Pozo Blanco," Apartado 116, Acarigua, Edo. Portuguesa, Venezuela.